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BRIEF

for presentation to

THE PRIME MINISTER

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE PIERRE ELLIOTT TRUDEAU, P.C., M.P.

by

The National Council of Women of Canada

Monday, January 24, 1972  
11:00 a.m.



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MRS. JOHN HNATYSHYN

PRESIDENT

and

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF CANADA

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## INTRODUCTION

The National Council of Women of Canada was organized in 1893 by Ishbel, Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair, G.B.E., LL.D., J.P., and was incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1914.

Under the distinguished patronage of Her Excellency, Mrs. Roland Michener, C.C., the organization is a non-sectarian, non-political federation of women's organizations and organizations of men and women, comprising many racial origins, occupations and ways of life in every province of Canada.

Within this structure Council has developed a sense of awareness and climate of concern regarding essential reforms and has been a force consistently in advance of its day.

Legislation urged by Council has frequently been introduced to strengthen the national structure and promote the well-being of citizens through better housing, public safety, conservation, recreation, health regulations, communications, education, public parks, libraries, factory inspection, penal reform and many services now accepted without thought of the dedication and strength of purpose that gave them reality.

The resolutions and the concerns presented today are brought to your attention with a sense of immediate urgency after consultation and study.

Council will continue to press forward with renewed energy to up-date and promote requests as yet not implemented and will continue to break new ground in accord with new conditions.

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UNIFORM HIGHWAY TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

WHEREAS, The number of motorized vehicles on interprovincial and intercity roads is increasing yearly; and

WHEREAS, There are many variations across Canada in Highway Traffic Regulations; and

WHEREAS, These variations, through ignorance of traffic regulations can and do, cause accidents sometimes fatal or serious; therefore

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to discuss in Dominion Provincial Conferences measures to make the Highway Traffic Regulations uniform across Canada, with the necessary legislation being enacted by Provincial Governments and to adopt the International Highway Signs.

## UNIFORM HIGHWAY TRAFFIC REGULATIONS -

The incidence of highway accidents caused, or contributed to, by variance in provincial traffic regulations is of concern to Council.

This concern has been supported by public interest in ten provinces and by consideration given to transport hazards by provincial officials and the "Canadian Conference of Motor Transport Authorities."

Council commends the Conference held between the Federal Transport Minister and the Council of Provincial Transport Ministers to study adaptation to uniform legislation of Part III of the National Transport Act.

Present highway statistics indicate the urgent need for continuous consultations and the introduction of legislation to ensure uniform highway traffic regulations throughout Canada.



HOSTELS FOR TRAVELLING YOUTH

WHEREAS, Young people today are travelling across Canada; and

WHEREAS, Young people require accommodation at a minimum rate;

therefore

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada request the

Government of Canada, together with the Provincial

Governments, to make available more hostels from May 15

to September 30; and further

RESOLVED, That accommodation be limited to three consecutive days

and a minimum rate be charged and adequate supervision

be given by mature adults.



## HOSTELS FOR TRAVELLING YOUTH -

Council is concerned with the need for and the quality and administration of hostels for travelling youth in Canada.

Hostels that provide adequate supervision and meet minimum standards laid down by the International Youth Hostel Federation have been built by the Federal Government in Banff and Jasper Parks and leased to the Canadian Youth Hostel Association.

Youth hostels in 45 countries have been constructed or purchased through government funds and operated through their Youth Hostel Associations.

It is essential to international tourism that the quality of accommodation these young travellers find is comparable to that in other countries.

ADOPTION OF THE METRIC SYSTEM IN CANADA

WHEREAS, The introduction of the Metric System in Canada would establish a means of measurement more applicable to a technical society; and

WHEREAS, 110 countries now use the Metric System and many of these are trading nations with Canada; therefore

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada request the Government of Canada to take steps to introduce the use of the Metric System in Canada.

ADOPTION OF THE METRIC SYSTEM IN CANADA -

Council believes that adoption of the Metric System under a co-ordinated conversion program would stimulate economic expansion and promote export trade essential to national progress.

Council officers and members noted with approval the establishment of a Preparatory Commission for Metric Conversion to initiate, co-ordinate and study implications of conversion in different sectors of the Canadian economy, with Mr. S.M. Gossage as Chairman.

In view of the need for economic expansion to improve present unemployment conditions immediate action is indicated.

THE DESIRABILITY OF PRESERVING OBJECTS OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL VALUE

WHEREAS, A rich cultural environment benefits all citizens within that environment; and

WHEREAS, In the past some of our cultural treasures have found their way out of Canada; therefore

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada bring to the attention of its federates the importance and desirability of encouraging the Canadian people to take an active interest in the preservation of our national culture; and further

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada request the Government of Canada to place adequate restrictions on export of antique irreplaceable objects which relate to our Canadian history.



THE DESIRABILITY OF PRESERVING OBJECTS OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL VALUE -

Council is concerned that there are no legislative restrictions to prevent export through private sale of objects of artistic, archaeological and historical value which should remain in Canada.

It is urged that adequate procedures be introduced without delay and criteria established to safeguard these objects of intrinsic national value.

ELIMINATION OF UNDESIRABLE FILMS AND DOCUMENTARIES FROM THE  
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION NETWORK, AND TIME RESTRICTIONS  
OF FILMS UNSUITABLE FOR CHILDREN

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WHEREAS, Television has proved to be a profound and far reaching  
influence in our everyday life; and

WHEREAS, The number of undesirable demoralizing films is steadily  
increasing; therefore

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada continue to  
urge the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation,

- a) to include more educational and higher quality films  
on their network,
- b) to make a careful selection of films shown in the  
early evening when children may be viewing.

ELIMINATION OF UNDESIRABLE FILMS AND DOCUMENTARIES FROM THE  
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION NETWORK, AND TIME  
RESTRICTIONS OF FILMS UNSUITABLE FOR CHILDREN -

Council is constantly alert to the standard of programs on the Canadian Broadcasting network.

The new advertising code for children entered into voluntarily by Canadian broadcasters is in accord with public concern and responsibility for quality of programming.

Council believes that the Government of Canada is also responsible for the quality of programming on the publicly owned network.

It is essential that programming include more educational films and that more attention be given to selection of suitable films in the early evening when children are viewing.

CANADIAN "SHORT" DOCUMENTARIES

WHEREAS, The National Film Board has done a great deal to interpret Canada to Canadians since it was established in 1939 as a Government Agency to supervise Government film production and distribution in Canada and abroad; and

WHEREAS, The high quality of the productions of the National Film Board has been recognized both at home and abroad in that during the past two years it has won more than 150 awards in International Film Competitions; and

WHEREAS, The Canadian Film Development Corporation, while producing fine films, is having distribution problems; and

WHEREAS, The Canadian people have not received the full benefit of these fine productions because for the most part American controlled theatres in this country book only American shorts with their American feature films, and the quality of these shorts does not compare, on the whole, with those produced by the National Film Board or other Canadian producers; nor do these American shorts contribute anything to the cultural life of Canadians; therefore

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada encourage the Provincial and Federal Governments in the interest of Canadian culture to specify a Canadian content in the showing of documentaries and shorts in Canadian theatres.



## CANADIAN "SHORT" DOCUMENTARIES

Council is conscious of the influence of film programming in creating and maintaining a national identity.

The quality and subject matter of documentaries and shorts shown in Canada contributes to national awareness and to international understanding.

When the Secretary of State submits the proposed Global Film Plan to Cabinet, Council requests that the Government designate a specific percentage of Canadian content in documentaries and shorts shown in motion picture theatres in Canada.

ABORTION

WHEREAS, Abortion is a matter of personal rather than public  
morality; and

WHEREAS, Abortion should be considered a medical not a legal  
procedure; therefore

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada request the  
Government of Canada to remove the sections pertaining to  
abortion from the Criminal Code of Canada.

## ABORTION -

This resolution reaffirms the position taken by Council in a presentation to the House of Commons Committee on Health and Welfare, December 1967; in a brief to Government January 30, 1967, and a presentation to the Royal Commission on the Status of Women March 1968.

NON-MEDICAL USE OF DRUGS

Trafficking in drugs has been a primary concern to Council for many years. In 1951 a letter to the Prime Minister requested more severe penalties for traffickers.

The Brief to Government in 1960 urged that tranquilizers be listed as prescription drugs.

A Federal Commission to research the use and abuse of drugs was requested some time before the Le Dain Commission was established. The final report of this Commission will be studied carefully.

National Council Executive, January 1970, resolved to ask the Government to "give attention to development, across Canada, of services which could be used as alternatives to criminal proceedings in dealing with offences without a direct victim", with particular relevancy to marijuana offences.

Letters requesting consideration of this need were written to the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Health and Welfare, the Solicitor General and the Le Dain Commission.

The letters stated that "the destructive effects of trafficking in drugs is a continuing concern to Council. Concern is for Canada as a nation; for the individual offender as a person and as a citizen; for the immature youth found in possession, lodged in jail and there brought under the influence of offenders with known criminal tendencies.

"While acutely aware of the crime of trafficking, Council urges pursuit of every possible avenue to explore the possibility of specialized treatment centres, and other alternatives, as well as further use of probationary orders in proceedings dealing with possession of marijuana."



### REITERATION OF POLICY

Since release of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, the Labour (Standards) Code has been amended and labour legislation under all jurisdictional levels has been enacted.

Bill C 229, an Act Respecting Unemployment in Canada, provided universal coverage and paid maternity leave and the Act ensured protection from sex discrimination in employment referrals.

No federal legislation has been enacted to provide for non-discrimination in employment. However, the Minister of Labour, in House of Commons debates, December 1, 1971, indicated his intent to introduce suitable amendments to the Fair Employment Practices Act in the next session.

These are significant advances. Council commends the Minister's action and the efficient support of the Women's Bureau, Department of Labour.

Recognition of the significance of voluntary service, especially the considerable voluntary service by Canadian women, has now been given weight in applications for administrative positions in the Public Service. This is commended as very important.

It is regretted no new legislation has been introduced to provide Day Care Centres, to aid family planning or to ratify ILO Convention 100. It is hoped that assistance to one parent families will be considered more fully on an interdepartmental basis with integrated action by the Departments of Justice, Manpower and of Health and Welfare.

The Royal Commission on the Status of Women recommended that the Canada Pension Plan "be amended so that the spouse who remains at home can participate in the plan".

Council submission to Government, February 22, 1971, noted the "necessity of ensuring to everyone, male and female, and regardless of marital status, the right to participate in public pension plans in his own right", and urged Government "to take steps to persuade private companies to eliminate difference in pension qualifications for men and women". This objective has high Council priority.

Council believes that the Citizenship Act should be amended to provide for automatic resumption of Canadian citizenship by women who married aliens before January 1, 1947; that more attention should be given to the status of Indian women; and that Section 164(1)(a) of the Criminal Code related to vagrancy be repealed and that alternate means be developed to deal with women who, while homeless or transient, "have no apparent means of support and cannot justify their presence in the place in which they are found". Matters of a similar nature were drawn to the attention of Government in the appended brief to the Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on the Constitution of Canada.

Council would draw attention to the 1971 resolution requesting that a woman be appointed at the policy making level in the Solicitor General's Department to have responsibility in relation to correctional treatment of the woman offender in Canada.

Council supported Bill S-20, An Act to Amend the Criminal Code, (Jury Duty for Women) and followed the Bill through the Senate and first reading in the House of Commons. It is strongly urged that this legislation be enacted without delay.

The recent agreement between the Justice Department and the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories to provide legal aid for the Territories is commended.

A Federal Human Rights Commission, responsible to Parliament, with the code following the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is supported by Council's policy. Legislation to bring this about has been urged.

Although Bill C-259, an Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, brings some relief to low income families, Council policy (1970) that income below the poverty level be exempt and that (1968) the basic income tax exemption be raised to \$2,500 for all citizens over 65 years has not been enacted.

Council congratulated the Minister of Finance when the contribution of the wife to the marriage partnership was recognized in 1968 by the concept of non-taxation on benefits transferred between spouses by gift or death. Council commends the Minister on continuance of this concept in the new Income Tax Act. It is hoped that this concept will be enacted provincially. Council would request the Federal Government to take the necessary steps to bring this about.

In a 1958 submission Council protested the practice of resale price maintenance, loss leader sales, and unethical marketing practices. Today Council watches for developments in legislation for consumer protection, particularly in the service industries.

Council commended the initiative of the Canadian Government and the Canadian legal representative on the International Civil Aviation Organization in conferences respecting unlawful interference in air travel and the seizure of aircraft. The December 1971 Extradition Treaty between Canada and the United States, Article 4 (2)(ii) is a significant instrument between these two countries. Council commends Canada's continuing efforts to bring about a satisfactory international instrument.

Council has made submissions requesting restriction of the use of atomic energy to peaceful purposes. The agreement signed January 7, 1972 between Canada and Iran, for co-operation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy, leads to the hope that similar agreements will be brought about between Canada and other countries.



Appointment of women to the Bench, the Senate and policy-making positions have been noted and commended during the year.

The acceptance of the first women, Miss Flora MacDonald, in the National Defence College, Kingston, eleven month course preparatory to administrative public service, defence and diplomatic service, was a notable breakthrough.

Following the present trend Council anticipates that many more women will be appointed by Order-in-Council in 1972.

When the report of the Inderdepartmental Study of the Privy Council Secretariat is brought before Cabinet it is hoped that a plan will evolve that will support Council concept of equal opportunity for all Canadians.

